

Mr. Robert Lightfoot to the position of Acting Center Director, George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), effective March 26, 2009.

Lightfoot, has served as Marshall's deputy director since May 2007. A native of Montevallo, Ala., he has shared responsibility for managing Marshall, one of NASA's largest field centers. The center has more than 8,400 civil service and contract employees performing a wide scope of propulsion, scientific and space transportation activities.

From 2005 to 2007, Lightfoot served as manager of the Space Shuttle Propulsion Office at Marshall, leading the organization with responsibility for the manufacture, assembly and operation of the primary shuttle propulsion elements: the main engines, external fuel tank, solid rocket boosters and reusable solid rocket motors.

For the two years prior to that, Lightfoot was assistant associate administrator for the Space Shuttle Program in the Office of Space Operations at NASA Headquarters in Washington. His responsibilities included space shuttle return to flight activities, budget formulation and integration of shuttle infrastructure into the Constellation Program, the new initiative of human exploration of the moon, Mars and beyond.

In 2002, Lightfoot was director of the Propulsion Test Directorate at NASA's Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis, Miss. He began his NASA career at Marshall in 1989 as a test engineer and program manager for the space shuttle main engine technology test bed program, and the Russian RD-180 engine testing program for the Atlas launch vehicle program.

Lightfoot has received numerous awards during his NASA career, including a NASA Outstanding Leadership medal in 2007 for outstanding and exemplary leadership of the Shuttle Propulsion Office and assuring safety for the shuttle's return to flight. In 2006, he was awarded the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executives -- the highest honor attainable for federal government work.